

School Scenario: Monarch High School

School Name Monarch High School	Grade Levels Served 9–12	Population Students: 3,673 Teachers: 125
Demographics Hispanic: 89% Other: 11%	Existing School Teams School Leadership Teams Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)	

The school has two campuses—one for freshmen and one for the remaining grades. Each campus has a principal. The freshman campus principal has been in the school district for 15 years and the principal at the freshman campus for seven years. The main campus principal has been at the school for one year, but was an assistant principal at the campus prior to becoming principal. The principals occasionally talk, but do not always have a consistent approach to district initiatives. The freshman campus principal has been in the district longer than many of the district leaders and is supported by the community. The community has a strong tie to the schools and the administration takes political changes in the community seriously.

The leadership team consists of the principals and district leadership. The team meets every other week, but members have a difficult time turning decisions into actions. The teachers' union is very strong and the administration is constantly under its scrutiny as well as cautious about making changes too quickly. Many meetings are planned each week, so the principals are often pulled from their buildings to attend the meetings. The main campus principal has so many teachers that he needs to rely heavily on the deans to work directly with the teachers. The teachers have much autonomy because of this. The freshman campus principal has a smaller staff and school and can therefore be more visible. He has a strong relationship with some teachers, but he intimidates others.

Both schools collect large amounts of data. All leaders are tasked with completing weekly walk-throughs and conducting formal classroom observations, but they often have difficulty finding time to conduct walk-throughs because of their busy schedules. Subject areas have common assessments a few times each semester and the schools use Measures of Academic Progress testing. The schools gather and periodically review all the data, but they do not necessarily use this data in action planning or next steps. The data do not drive professional development, but the walk-through form is based on schoolwide professional development on specific instructional strategies. Most teachers have full schedules, but some do not and may have limited instructional duties although they work full-time. Although schedules and manuals do drive decision making, deciding which teachers to staff where can be problematic. The freshman campus has teams of content teachers that work with groups of students, while the main campus runs as a more traditional high school. This creates different approaches to scheduling and staff usage.

The schools have 11 coaches—five at the freshman campus and six at the main campus. The schools have had coaches for five years, but with the grant money, they were able to double the

number of coaches and add technology coaches. The principals and coaches rarely meet because the coaches report directly to district leaders. The coaches from both campuses, however, do meet weekly. Coaches lead schoolwide professional development on consistent instructional strategies that are expected to be implemented across content areas, but this is not the consistent focus of coaching actions. The coaches have developed a cycle of coaching, but struggle to get many teachers to participate in coaching and often spend time coaching the same teachers. The coaches spend much of their time researching as well as planning and often are not provided the opportunity to push into classrooms. One of the objectives of the grant is to have 100 percent of teachers coached within the next three years, yet the administration struggles with developing an action plan to make this happen. The coaches have expressed that they often review data with teachers, but would like to use this data to better drive coaching actions. The data that the schools collect on coaching actions are not teacher-specific and do not clearly summarize the coaching actions.

Every Wednesday is a late start to give teachers time to meet in PLCs according to content area. The department head is the lead of the team, but other roles are unclear. The PLC time is used to create common assessments and review common assessment data. The data is all fed into a district database, so the group can look at the data in relation to other teachers and buildings. Expectations for PLCs have been established, but not all members participate and PLC discussions often diverge from the intended goals. Coaches attend PLCs by invitation and administrators occasionally stop in during PLC time.

Address the following:

- What are some of the challenges these principals are facing?
- What are some things the principal could do differently?
- Prioritize and recommend next steps.
- Use the action plan format to identify one next step for this principal.